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Rare Treasure, 72-Lb. Silver Bar on Display in Nassau

NASSAU, Bahamas—Future visitors in Nassau will soon have an opportunity to see one of the world's rarest treasure finds, and along with it a new booklet describing the history of the treasure and its discovery.

Late in 1950, a 72-pound silver bar was discovered in an ancient wreck off Gorda Cay, Abaco, a tiny islet about 50 miles north of Nassau. News of the discovery reached the world last Summer, and now after almost a year of research, a full report on the bar's worth and history is available.

In a 20-page booklet published by the Bahamas Development Board, one of the world's best-known numismatic authorities, Andrew J. S. McNickle of Mexico City, declares that the bar "is the best specimen of its kind known in the world today."

According to McNickle, it was minted in the year 1652 in a Spanish foundry in the new kingdom of Granada, now Colombia.

"At the time it was cast, the bar represented the accumulated life wages of two workmen in the Americas," McNickle's report states.

The sunken bar, along with several rare coins, was discovered by Roscoe Thompson and Howard Lightbourn, two Nassau businessmen who have spent more than a decade searching for treasure on the ocean floor of the Bahamas.

The silver ingot was acquired by Albert E. Worswick of Nassau, who donated it to the Bahamas Development Board.

The bar and the descriptive booklet of its history will be on display at the board's tourist information center in Nassau.

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